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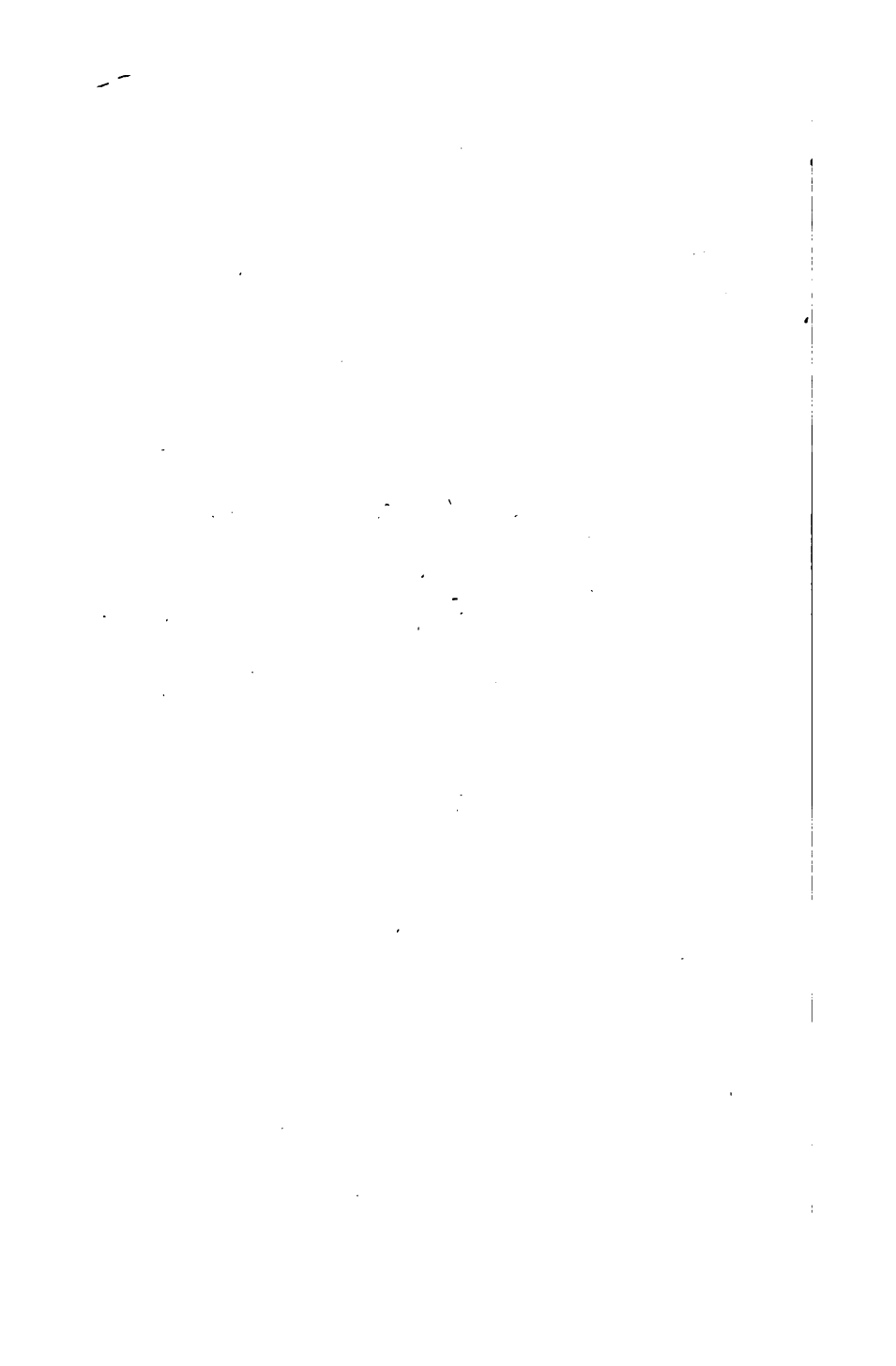


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Page 1



THE

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GARDEN OF ART.

“ The germs that perished to thine eyes,
Within the cold lap of the earth,
Spring up to bloom in gentler skies,
The brighter for the second birth.”

“ They shall bloom in upper air
While the root steals down to night.”

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BY DÆDALUS.  
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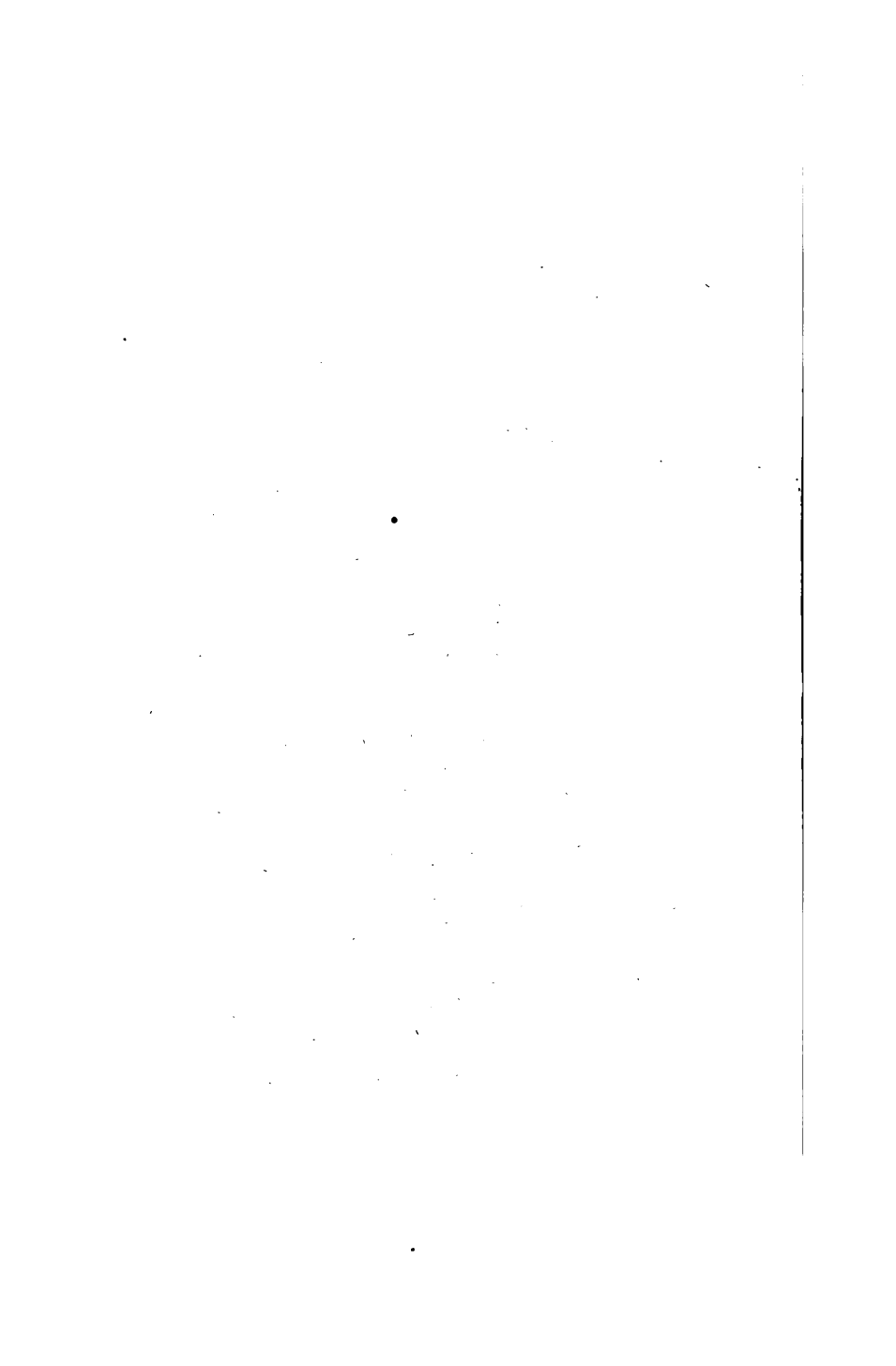
S. W. BENEDICT,
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THE GARDEN OF ART.

DEDICATED

TO THE

MUSE.



THE GERM.

Long, long have I watch'd Thee,
 dear Plant, with tender solicitude.
Given water to thy roots, and sunlight
 to thy leafy stem ;
And yet, thou would'st not grow :
 thee many long years did cherish,
And I could see no change, increase
 none—not one leaflet more !
Unaspiring, spiritless plant ;
 I said ; most unworthy !
There is hope for thee no more !
 and then thy leaves grew pale.
—Drooping, slowly withering
 away, every day sinking,
Until all became yellow and sear,
 footstalk and branches,

And sadly disappointed, alas,
I thought thee dead.
But now, what pleasure is
mine ; hope, with surprise delightful ;
Forth from thy withering stem,
bursting in beauteous strength,
Freshly thou sendest to light—
Thyself—a new, young being !
Silent, unseen, thou workedst,
alone in thy hermet-cell.
Wert striving in thine inmost
heart :—That was thy thinking time.
With thy wondrous plastic power
moulding the hard elements—
From the deep murky earth-walls,
drawing the pure liquid gem
Thyself to clothe in emerald
robes, splendidly glowing !
Now, fairer than the vain bird
that in glittering plumage
Is ever abroad boasting, claiming
admiration,
Thou, simply clad, but gracefully,
appearest to greet thy friend :
Sendest no herald of thy coming,
none, of thy worth—

J. G. V. M.

Unexpected, alone thou comest ;
agreeable surprise :
Plainly improvement declares,
what thou hast been doing—
Every moment tellest more of
thy worthy progress.
Thus thou speakest out the
thoughts thou hadst at home in thy cell.
Thus, too, thou givest promise ;
what thou wilt do, is certain.
Under thy glossy emerald cloak—
all concealed now,
Carefully wrapp'd in many a fold
of soft white tissue,
Thou bringest a casket, set all
around with precious gems,
Which thou'st been mining, down
there in the dark so cunningly—
A rich casket, fill'd with thy
wonder-work ; incense and fruit !
All, thou wilt unfold and smilingly
present to thy friend.

For thy still, modest genius,
I love thee, Dear Plant—truly.

CONCEPTIVE THOUGHT.

ARE, for thy genius I love
thee—for thy beauty admire.

Another one, close beside thee,
more promise had given :
Of That, more hope was cherish'd,
not so quickly it faded :
After long stillness, one word
was spoken, one leaf revived.
All now is silent, invisible,
every life pulse—
While thou, inferior as thou
wast, comest so brightly forth !
Can it be that the silent One,
herself will never reveal !

Live on so selfishly ? promise
 never fulfilling !
 Miserly hoarding up her jewels,
 never imparting ?
 Ah, knew she how anxiously,
 heartfull, waiting her friend is
 To pour out love for her
 treasures of Beauty and genius—
 She too would come to the
 light, and let him say
 “ Dear Plant,
 Thee I love.”

DEVELOPMENT.

For Thee, dearest Plant, silent
 One, still longer I've waited—
 Even in sleep not forgetting,
 never ceasing to hope :
 Meanwhile trembling with fear,
 or, was it excess of hoping ?
 I know not, but fond expectation
 was mingled with pain.
 Some token thou gavest, and momentarily
 watching thy coming—
 All else forgetting, I breathlessly,
 silently gazed.
 And when, but ah, that bright
 moment of time, and its feeling !
 Let it pass,—I saw thee in
 beauty revealed to the light.

Mysterious one ! what shall thy
friend, to thee not unpleasing,
Express of the art-work, thy
genius so splendidly wrought ?
Thou speakest not clearly,
tho' glowing thy language ;
A sense seems to linger, unspoken,
concealed in thy heart.
Can it be thou art timid
from thy too long seclusion ?
Or wouldst finish thy thought
to completeness ere thou reveal ?

Ah, now through the casement
a purer morning light streaming,
Revealeth the truth which the
darkness concealed from the sight.
Clear on the green-glowing
love-written scroll thou'rt unrolling,
Eloquent words, all expressing
thy deep meaning, I trace.

Yet those radiant love-lines, for
thy friend were not sculptured.
He ardently loved, yet it seemest
Thou knowest him not !

When so long in thy hermet-
cell, alone thou wert musing,
He heard a still-breathing
love-song and believed it was thine.
Was it not? and must the bright
hope appear all delusion?
Was it not thine? and whisper'd
to him, the enchanted one?
Why then to Thee, and thee only,
from the first eye attracted,
Was his then passive heart
as by a magical spell!
But to her warm heart, still
youthful, maternal arms close thee;
Clinging fondly, to her thou
art waving thy censer of love—
To her loving eyes those eloquent
leaves, too, unfolding,
While coolly retiring, thou
turnest away from thy friend.
Alas, now his heart-streams,
whose striving, warm flowing currents
Long restrained, impatiently
waiting thy coming, to flow:
By thy seeming indifference,
thy looks uninviting,

Like floods, chilling-winter-arrested,
rush back on his soul.
Yet still he will love thee,
thee only, more than all others ;
For a flame thou hast kindled
whose burning never can die,
And still he will cling to
thee, still hoping thy sympathy
Will, will return, him inspiring
to art not unworthy thy love.

Tho' vain this fond hoping, yet
will he praise thee, and cherish,
For even thy silence instruction
gave, deeper than words.
When Thou, in the dark, wert
thinking, inventing and searching ;
He knew thou wouldst bring
from the formless earth, beauty and life.
Then, like thee, he strove alone
in the mines of reflection,
To bring from the Formless *there*,
symmetry, Order, and Truth.
And now, as into the region of
light, thou liftest thyself—

Climbing on sun-beams, with
thy beautiful work to the sky,
Still, will he follow, and up to
a higher life striving—
On the beams of thy genius—
the rythm of thy growth
he will climb.

EMBODIMENT.

WORTHIEST cherished One, wilt be
 ever thus silent ?—
 Thus for ever secluded, confining
 all thoughts on thine art ?
 Canst thou not genial be ?
 since from thy long cloister'd culture
 Thou couldst come to the light,
 so perfect in beauty and strength ?
 Canst thou not friendly be ?
 in all else thou'rt deem'd artist,
 And true genius findeth no
 loss in imparting, but gain.
 All givest thou, that one
 gazing on beauty could gather,
 Or on genius so clear, so
 swiftly advancing as thine ;

Think'st thou this should content
him, who is ardently striving,
As well for the *Spirit* as *Form*
and Expression of Art?—

Never can this be!—contented to
gaze without sympathy!

No; Beauty may drop in the
eye's passive mirror her *Form*,

Which may sink to the depths
of the soul's glowing fountain,

Yet withholding her *Spirit*, chill
the warm currents of life.

Thy beautiful form on my long
striving soul is impress'd,

With the radiant, hallowing
light, thy spirit imparts,—

And tho' withdrawn from the
sight, thy pure image remaineth,

And I fain would believe that
thy sympathy lingereth too.

Be this Hope's fond delusion,
or reality's promise,

I will cling to it ever, it
must be real and true.

Ha ! now thou descendest from
thy bower of concealment ?
Throwest off the leafy disguise
from thy radiant brow ;—
To thee will I speak,—and no
more to the Flower,—revealing
My heart to thy spirit, long
concealed in mystery there.
Thou hast given me courage,
it may be unconsciously,
Yet a strength thou hast
given my spirit, I knew not before :
And I would protect thee from
the world's heartless vanity,
For the power, art-inspiring,
Thou hast given my soul.
To the bright realm of Beauty
Thou hast open'd the portal—
With pinions endow'd me to
soar through its unbounded fields.
There, with the Art thou hast
given, I will build thee a Temple,
Where my muse, and my guardian
spirit, Thou only shalt reign.

EXPRESSION.

LONGINGS of soul, who had never,
 for something exalted ?
 Some high goal of honor,
 undefined, yet hallowed to gain ?
 Who in thought ne'er arose, from
 his career uneventful,
 To deeds more worthy of life
 than the present demands ?—
 ——— And high exultations—
 Warm glowings of heart and of mind,
 who could but feel,—
 When with Thee to inspire him,
 in that region exalted
 He seized on the forms of high !
 beauty, all clustering there ?—

To bring them to light, who'd
not strive, and interpret their language, .
That all kindred spirits might
share in his triumphs of soul ?

Such longings and hopes have been
mine, and high aspirations,—
Even now can I see through yonder
vista far gleaming,
The sheen of that radiant
goal, inviting me on.

Thus far Thou hast led me,
Thou, never—never forsaking ;
The light of thy spirit and beauty
hath opened the way !

This, have I not told thee, and
more, in grateful devotion ?
Still in a thousand choruses
I will sing it again.
How in a luminous pathway
thou hast guided me on,—
And how the mazes of life, by
thy torch I have journey'd—

And borne all its conflicts
with calmness, with courage and hope.
How in the shadows of night,
there came visions of beauty,—
Bright musical spirits, in
air-circles, moving aloft,—
With Thee in the midst, leading,
as they sang and ascended,
While the air, all harmonious,
flowed round the couch where I slept,—
And how its magical breathing
my spirit awaken'd
To higher perceptions of beauty,
in Nature and Life.—
And when the Dawn glimmering
through the casement, awoke me,
And the bright Morn arous'd
to the clear realities of day,—
There came thoughts swiftly
thronging, how in glorious action,
I would make myself worthy
of thy confidence and love.

If with unchasten'd ardor
from thy promptings I've wander'd;

And given but wild phantasies
for thy grand and beautiful thoughts,
I know Thou'lt forgive,—'twas
from haste to give them expression,
To save some shade of their
spirit, ere they vanished away.

—— And now, in thy hands
I surrender my destiny.—
O keep it well ! with Thee it
sinks, or lifts itself to Heaven.

EPITHESES.

"Who succeedeth? Dreadful question!
Which involveth Destiny."

Ask the most perfect Artist if he has reached the goal of ideal excellence, and he will reply: "not quite yet." And so it is with all human effort. Almost all, like the Artist, have spiritual aspirations. They may not, like him, search through all forms and elements to find the beautiful in Idea revealed a substantial and glorious reality; yet they are striving for a great something, which they may not be able to define, but hope some day to realize, and call their own. All have an ideal goal, whose attainment they feel to be indispensable to their happiness. But, alas, how far short of it do most of us fall!

We cannot but commiserate the Artist whom we may know to be striving for the utterly unattainable. Yet there is great consolation for him as well as all other generous aspirants, that the *hope* will sustain him, and that

although he may not seize upon all, as a palpable materiality; he *may* find the ideal realized to his *soul's* content, in the region where :

" Above the reach of time and storm,
Playmate with blessed ones up yonder,
She amid the gods of light doth wander
Godlike 'mid the Gods, undying *Form*."

We know it to be intended by this, that Art can attain pure excellence, or at least the perfect crown of Beauty, only in the realm where imagination exalts the mind. This is true. It is equally true that the Artist must have a formative model in real life for the imagination to start from; and no matter to what height he may rise in the ideal *unknown*, he is finally compelled to return again to the real and *known*, so as to give to his design the features of humanity,—the impress and language of life.

There is something as real as it is beautiful in the Fable of the Muse, guiding and inspiring the Artist; no wonder he should be grateful for her influence—he knows so well that without it, his efforts would result only in the frigid product of Thought, and could never mount to the dignity of the achievements of heart-warmed and soul-lighted genius.

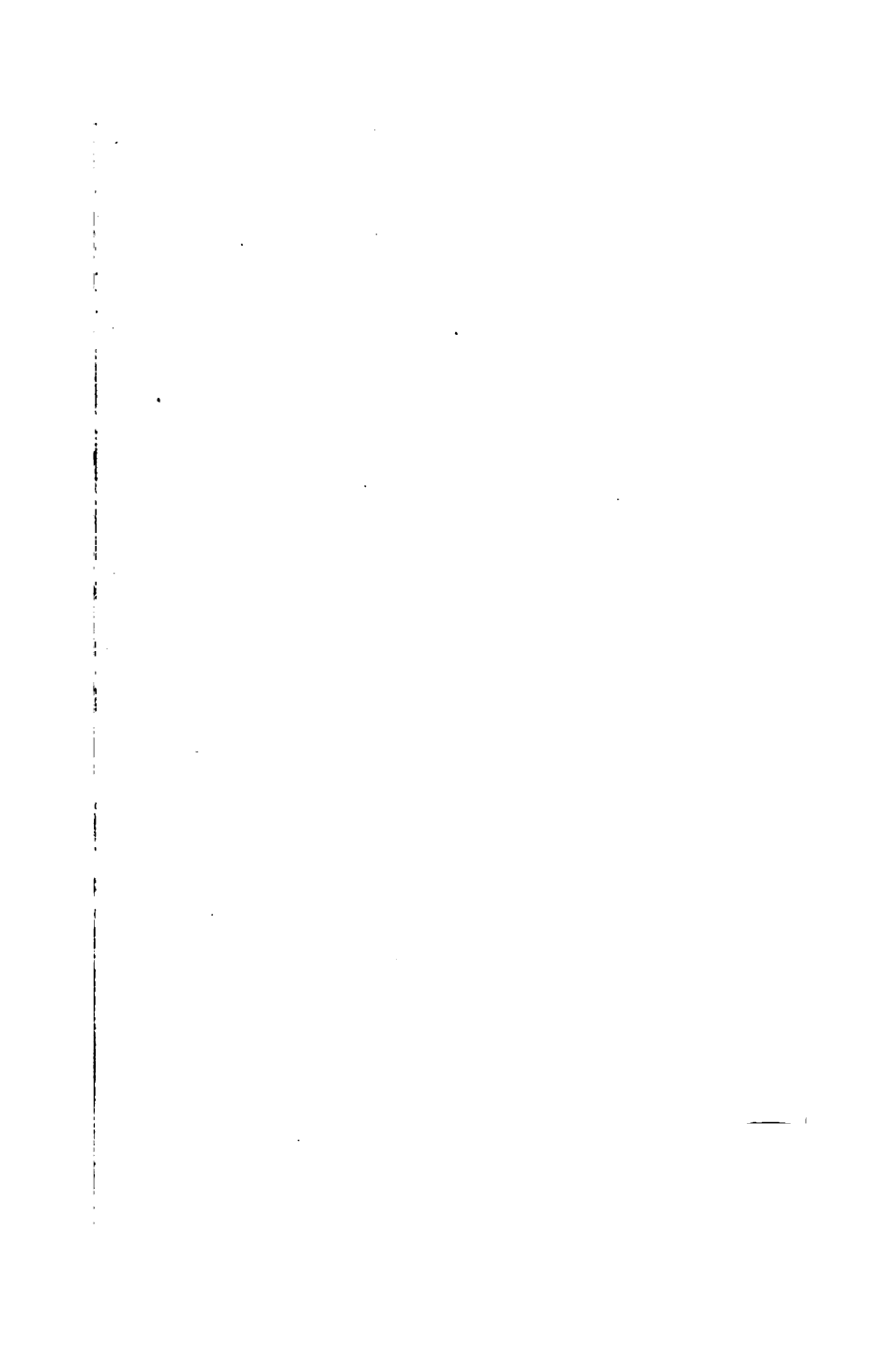
Whether I have given an adequate picture of the Artist's nature and aspirations—whether I have a just conception of the elements in which he moves, or the genial influ-

ences that arouse and develope his powers,—of this I am certain: that whatever powers the Artist, or any of us possess, that are in any way spiritually worthy, owe their development, their free and beautiful activity to other beings than ourselves, and if there is anything for which there should be, and is, felt a profound and soul-glowing gratitude, kindred to that we owe the Creator for the gift of *Existence*, it is for the influence of those who excite to action our higher faculties of mind and of heart. To them no material service would be deemed by the recipient an adequate return, and no language would the Artist, above all others, consider too extravagant to express his gratitude. If I were an Artist—using the title in its comprehensive sense—for that kind of influence I would cherish this sentiment in my deepest soul—I would for ever love those who should exercise it, even though they might never feel a like emotion, and no fear of indifference should restrain me from making it known.

In the "Garden of Art," I have endeavored to illustrate the Artist's search for the Beautiful and devotion to the Muse; I sent him forth in search of her divine and perfect form, supposing him to have been breathed upon by her SPIRIT.

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